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STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY.

BY MRS S. C. HALL.

"Mind not high things: but condescend to men of low estate."
ST PAUL.

"SURE IT WAS ALWAYS SO!"

THE incident and conversations I am about to relate occurred in a very picturesque but wild neighbourhood on the sea shore—not in my own more civilised district, but where I spent a fortnight of mingled pleasure and pain, where I saw misery it was out of my power to relieve, and found the people so fond of assuring us things were *always so*, that it was no easy matter to convince them things might be better than they were. The house where we were domiciled commanded a wild and extensive sea view. Miserable and neglected cottages clung to the crumbling walls of a domain once of princely extent, and no fashionable lady ever laboured to *kill time* more zealously than the amphibious occupants of those huts. Amphibious I may well call them; the men were fishers by profession, that is, they went to sea when compelled to do so by the want of that simple food which is all they desire. They were (the younger portions of the community especially) very independent of clothing. The women—what did they do? Why, they married and nursed children, and sat in the sun in summer, and over their turf or drift-wood fire in the winter, carried the fish their husbands caught to the farmers' houses, or the dwellings of the gentry; made nets, and knit stockings, although they seldom mended either the one or the other. The children (what healthy, ruddy-brown, handsome, young things they were!) ran about and over the rocks and sands at low water, gathered the pretty conical periwinkle, or knocked the green-striped limpets off the rocks, watched cunningly for the rising of the observant razor fish, or waded through the rippling waves to catch the springing shrimps. Women and men both gathered delisk, and what they call *sleek*, or *sleekawn* (I cannot spell it, but so it sounds), here called *Laver*; they were indolent as the Neapolitan lazzaroni, and quite as picturesque; very sensible of kindness, as the Irish peasant always is; superstitious, as dwellers by the mighty waters commonly are; patient and cheerful, willing to do any thing in the world for "the quality," and as little as possible for themselves; honest as truth itself. There we were in the midst of what in England is branded with the degrading term of "*pauper population*," poor half-starved, half-dressed, ragged creatures, and yet neither lock nor bolt was ever used in the house. I tried once to turn the key in the great hall door. I shall never forget the amused countenance of the good old master of the mansion, when he found me with both hands endeavouring to accomplish my intent.

"God bless you, my dear! let it alone. I give you my honour" (his pet declaration) "that key has never been turned in that lock since the year of the rebellion; and though we had hardly any of it here, Pat Delaney and myself fixed it for locking, and the fishermen heard of it, and came up, women and all, roaring and crying to know what they had ever done to make me lock my doors."

There never was a more benevolent man than our host, but he said he had nothing left to give to the poor, except kind words, and had grown so accustomed to their misery, that he did not seem to mind it—it was a thing of course; in truth, he had deep sorrows of his own. One evening we were sitting in the ruined window of the grey old tower that overlooked a stony bridge-road, leading from the beach to a near mountain; the old gentleman had gone to the neighbouring town to consult his attorney about some five or six

lawsuits that were coming on, or hanging over, and his daughter and myself were chatting and systemising, she, alive to every plan of improvement, but lacking patience to carry them into execution, mourning over her lack of means, while I proved, at all events to my own satisfaction, that more improvement can be worked out in Ireland *without* money, than in any other country in the world *with* it. Nothing can be done in England without *capital*. Every hundred you possess is a step in public estimation; but there are many ways to an Irishman's heart, *wealth* being the last, the very last thing to raise you in his opinion. A person of small means, gifted with good temper, *patience*, and good sense, could work miracles in Ireland—*patience* being an indispensable requisite to every planner of Irish improvement.

Well, there we sat, and presently a woman, bearing in her hand a kettle, having lost its cover and the top of its nose, and balancing a pitcher in tolerably perfect condition, followed, of course, by a numerous progeny, strolled up the hill.

"Good evening to you, Molly," said my friend. "God bless you, miss, and give the masher great glory over his enemies. We know he's away to the lawyer's; and, Miss Machree, if I war to send up to the big house, may be you wouldn't have a *biteen* of plaster to take the sting out of 'little Sandy's' foot—a burn the craytur got last night on his shin, while I was away for the water. Oh, thin, it's weary to think we've so far to go for a *droppeen* of water. Oh, wisha! wisha! I often pray to God to make the salt sea fresh, and then we'd have it ready to *bile* the paytees in, at our own door. My husband says it's a sin for me to be going that way against *nature*, 'for,' says he (he's a knowledgeable man), 'Molly,' says he, 'you ould fool, if the sea was *fresh* water, what would we do in the Lent for salt herrings! Any way, my heart's broke these ten years, *ever since I cum to the place*, for want of fresh water.'"

Having been assured that Sandy should have a plaster, Molly went toiling and grumbling up the hill; and I learned for the first time that the want of "fresh water" was a serious inconvenience to the fishers' village, as they had more than a mile to go for it.

Presently up came a party of young girls laughing, so that their white teeth glittered like pearl; balancing their pitchers on their heads with inimitable ease, while their bare feet passed over the stones without apparent annoyance, and their carriage so free and graceful as they placed their hands on the water-vessels, and dropt their curtsy beneath our window, would have made the fortune of a *danceuse*.

"Margaret," said my friend, "where's Norah?"

"Is it Norah, miss! She had a misfortune, miss, with Katty Maggs's can. The sharp rock at the edge of the stream above there knocked the side out of it, and she's hiding for fear of Katty Maggs; and sure that same stone has destroyed every thing, sticking up so sharp at the most convenient place to draw the water."

"Is it a big stone?"

"No, ma'am, but cruel sharp."

"Why isn't it removed?"

"Oh, ma'am, *sure it was always so*; we must mind better, or there wout be a pitcher in the town-land left alive with it!" And away tripped the maidens.

Many others, women, girls, and children, followed, all complaining of the want of water, all complaining of the distance, and all murmuring that they had nothing "fit" to bring home "a sup" of water in, which was perfectly true. Old women, and thirsty men, followed after a time, some pausing to lean against the

grey stones that formed the *ditches*, others ascending the hill half way, and then lying down on the road, to await the water-carriers' return; and they, too, bewailed the want of water.

"It's the ruin of the women and girls this going to the hill-spring, miss," said a crabbed-looking old sailor to my companion. "I can't get my Nelly to mend a net, or put a hand to the boat, for going for water, and half the time spent in gossiping. I'm sure I wish some one would see if there's any truth in what ould Grizzle Burn used to say, of a well her mother drew water from, where the white thorn hangs over the cliff. To be sure, the tree in my memory was *always so*."

"And is it possible," I exclaimed, "that there is the remotest chance of your obtaining water so near home, and yet you have never sought it?"

"*It was always so*," repeated the crabbed old sailor; "my mother, God be good to her, broke her leg, and went a cripple to her grave, through the manes of the sharp stone at the hill-spring's side; bad luck to it for a stone! *It was always so*."

The very stone, I suppose, that had completed the ruin of Katty Maggs's can!

My friend was not a bit too well pleased that I had received another hint as to the injurious effects of "we'll see about it;" the gentry are very apt to take offence if you notice an Irish fault; I am constantly obliged to remind them that

"I too am of Arcadia,"

and have an undoubted right to find fault with my own. God help them! if they loved the land with the affection I bear to every blade of its green grass, it would have a more peaceable and prosperous peasantry. Why have they not found out that an Irishman must be actively employed, to be either peaceable or happy! But to my story. Those who arrived first from the hill-spring had to return there again, for the thirsty waiters drank the water, with the certainty that it was cheerfully bestowed.

"Take another drink, Andy, poor man!" said one of the slight girls to the crabbed sailor. "Wisha! I wish it was potteen, or whisky itself, for your sake, if I have to go back every step of the way for more. God refresh you with it, and don't be cross to the wife, Andy. She has an *impression** about her heart with the wakeeness, and I tould her not to hurry. I'll put the paytees down for you before she comes, if you like, for shrimping's hungry work."

"Granny, I brought your share and my own this time," exclaimed another, addressing an old woman, "and didn't feel it much; only I think I'll bring yours in the morning, and our own in the evening."

"Let us go," said my friend.

I paused to look one moment at the beautiful sunset, which steeped the roofs of the fishers' huts, as they lay crouching and crowded together—in molten gold; beyond lay the sea, as I have shown in Burnt Eagle's history, a liquid rolling living mine of wealth, and yet those poor creatures could hardly subsist; there was no one to teach them how to husband the treasures the mighty deep almost cast upon the shore; they possessed heart and feeling, the drink of water was given with a good will, that to my fancy converted it to nectar, and that girl had managed the crabbed sailor so well, that he positively smiled upon his wife, and offered to take her pitcher; and yet those *feeding* creatures could go day after day, year after year, to the hill-spring, and never take the trouble to discover if really the gushing waters of a well were buried beneath the thorn-tree.

Which is most necessary, I inquired of myself, to

* Oppression.

the well-doing of a community, reason or feeling! It cannot prosper without the exercise of both.

"It is the worst case," I said aloud at last. "This 'it was always so' is decidedly the worst case I have met with in Ireland. Why did not your father excavate this well?"

"Oh, my father has something else to think about—'it was always so.'"

I could not help smiling at my friend's unconscious repetition of the to me obnoxious sentence, and sighed when I thought how much the character indicated by these four little words, ran through the country.

I slept and dreamed of bright bubbling springs, and awoke before sunrise. I looked out of the window, and saw two crows; every body in the world knows it is lucky to see two crows, particularly before sunrise; indeed, those who have a great deal to do will find it "lucky" to see any thing before sunrise, either a single crow or a single magpie; but having seen two crows, I felt bound as an Irishwoman to be exceedingly rejoiced at the good omen, and therefore summoned the only allies I could depend on, my own maid, and an old man, who, according to his own account, knew and respected "my people" before I was born. Having succeeded in rousing them from their slumbers, we proceeded to the old thorn-tree, but unfortunately there was only one fisherman on the beach, and my inquiries touching the well were not likely to be very successful.

"Did you never hear there was a well near that tree?"

"A well, is it?" "Yes, a well."

"Oh, sure they fetch every sup of water from the hill-spring."

"I know they do; but there is a well, or there was a well, somewhere hereabouts."

"Myself don't know."

"Did you never hear that there was a well long ago under that thorn-tree?"

"Myself has no call to the tree; it's on Nancy Cahill's ground, and nobody meddles with Nance; the tree 'was always so.'"

I was not pushed from my purpose by this hint of Nance's quarrelsome propensities. There were a number of cottage gardens, or what should have been gardens, grown into one, for the divisions were not even perceptible, and the thorn-tree grew, or hung, at the bottom of the one that appertained to Nancy Cahill. My ally could give me no information; "sure my honour know he came from another country." At last we discovered a very old white-headed man asleep on some lobster pots in an almost bottomless boat; the lobster pots ought to have been set the over night, but the old man and his son had a very successful "haul" two nights before; and why they should be at the trouble to set and haul the pots, except when they wanted, did not enter into their calculations. However, he half arose and set me at rest as to the spot; close to the left of the thorn-tree the well had certainly existed, at least so his aunt Biddy had said.

"Did no one ever endeavour to open the well?"

"Bedad I don't know; it had no luck."

"How no luck?—was the water bad?"

"Is it the water? Bedad I don't know, I never heard tell; but I believe the stones or something gave way, and thin the water was choked. 'Sure it was always so;' they fetch all the water from the hill-spring; many a good tide I've lost, waiting for the women to fetch it."

"We are going to try and find the well."

"A yarra wisha! Sure it's a long way down, and on Nancy Cahill's field."

"Will you come and help us to try?—we will provide you a pick-axe."

"Oh, God bless yer honour, I was never used to that sort of work; I'm a fisherman!" and he laid himself down with an air of such lazy determination, that I saw nothing more could be done with him. The sun had risen before my old man James got to work, and the brightness of the grass over the spot the fisherman had pointed out, would have convinced any one in the habit of watching the indications of nature, that water was at no very great distance beneath.

I must say we worked very hard, and the signs and ejaculations of my English maid were not the least amusing part of the exhibition. We soon found the clay clammy, then positively wet; anon, and little unwashed, undressed children came running forth, to look and wonder. Presently Nancy herself, with drapery floating in the fresh sea-breeze, made her way over a heap of mingled shells of oyster, periwinkle, limpet, and all the shells of the sea, and then through a stagnant pool, of any thing but sweet savour, and stood before me with a very sour expression of countenance.

"Well, Mrs Cahill, what will you give me for finding a well on your estate?"

"Plase yer honour, I never get any thing; how can I give—"

"Don't say that; you'll have fresh water to give to all your neighbours."

"Oh, sure I knew it was in it."

"And why did not you get it out of it? How old are you, Mrs Cahill?" This was an unfortunate question; I ought to have known better than to have asked it; her lowering brow soon showed me my mistake. "Well, you are five-and-thirty, I suppose," Mrs Cahill smiled. She was certainly fifty; so on thirty and the odd five being named, she smiled, satisfied that I intended no discourtesy.

"How old were you when you began to draw water at the hill-spring?"

"Oh, yarra! maybe five, not more."

"And since then you have spent two hours every day drawing water?"

"Is it two hours? Yarra wisha! nearer upon three, or maybe four, of a time I'd have a bit of washing or cleaning to do. Not often—"

"Well, say two; two hours a-day are fourteen hours a-week; that is 56 hours a-month, 168 hours a-quarter, 672 hours a-year! See all the time you have wasted—no fewer than 840 days in the course of thirty years!"

"See that now!" she exclaimed, with an air of provoking wonder, which, if she had not been an Irish woman, I should have called stupid.

"Two hours a-day, properly managed, goes a long way towards making a house comfortable."

"Anan!" exclaimed Mrs Cahill, sitting down upon her heels to watch our progress; when seated, as she would call it, comfortably, she said, "Ye're kindly welcome, my lady, to *disart yerself* as long as ye please at the well (since it's a well ye'll have it), but take care of the *ould tree*. My great-grandfather planted it, I've heard tell, for a *shelter to the well*, and I'd be sorry it was hurt, out of respect to his memory!" Now, was it not provoking that this woman knew of the existence of that well, had its tradition from her great-grandfather, and yet had spent so many of the best hours of her life going to the hill-spring! I liked her, however, for reverencing the *ould tree*. In a little time the whole population of the village turned out to watch our operations; old James plied his axe and shovel right well; the English girl plucked away the roots and flung aside the stones; young and old men, young and old women, looked on—some listlessly, some with anxiety; none offered to assist. "Come, will you not help?" I said at last.

"Yes, my lady, only we must go now to the hill-spring, or the fathers'll have no paytees in time for breakfast. God send you good luck, my lady!"—and three or four girls went off.

"But you—you young man—poor James is tired; take the pick or the spade; it is for the comfort of you and yours we are thinking and working."

"God save ye, my lady, ye have a tender heart, and we'll go from this to Jericho to serve you; but in regard of labouring work, I was never used to it, madam. I'm a fisherman, my lady."

"And do you think I'm used to it?" said the maid, petulantly.

"Oh no, bedad!" was the reply. "We never thought you was used to any useful thing. Why, it's a pity you should trouble yerself, miss!"

"To think," she muttered, "that they will not help themselves."

"We must teach them *patiently*."

Still it was very provoking to see them lounging and loitering about. At last the water began to ooze forth.

"See that now!" exclaimed Nancy. "Who'd ha' thought it, and it all so covered up!"

"Sure it was *always so*," observed another. "In rainy times the water would shine through the grass; only, Mrs Cahill, ma'am, as the well was on your land, it wasn't our business to look to it."

"That's true for ye," said the crabbed-faced sailor; "sure I know myself it's not pace and quietness meddling with Nancy Cahill."

"What's that you say, you —," and Nancy seized a stone, which she would certainly have hurled at the last speaker, but that her arm was held down, while all exclaimed, "Oh, Nancy, for shame!—before the quality! Oh, Nancy!"

"Look," said the termagant, rising, and standing with her arms akimbo, "I'm a quiet woman, and a God-fearing, peace-loving woman; but by all the books that ever war shut and opened, if ye don't every one, barring the lady and her helps, quit my bit o' land, see if I don't—" I never shall forget the fierce expression of her countenance, as men, women, and children withdrew, muttering, "Sure it was *always so*," and left her in undisturbed possession of her estate.

"It's only a bit of a breeze," muttered James; "when it blows over, there's worse-hearted women in the world than Nancy Cahill." She watched progress for another hour.

"There's water sure enough, and I suppose it was *always so*; but look at the trouble yer honour has had, and not sure that the earth won't fall in again as it did before; think of that now!"

"The earth will fall in, certainly, again, if it is not prevented," I replied; "but I hope you are convinced that if a thousandth part of the time and labour had been spent in excavating the well, that was expended in fetching water from the hill-spring, the well would have been useful to this day."

"That's true," said Nancy.

The sun was high and fervent, so I went to my home for the time being, proud of my achievement,

and amused at the observations of my English servant.

"I never saw such people spending an hour upon what could be done in a minute; I wonder will they do any thing to the well while we are away—it really would not be believed in England!"

"And there really is a well?" said my friend; "I have heard so, but I remember papa saying it must all be a story, because, if it was not, surely they would have found it out. There is some legend, too, about it, at least I think so; I almost forget what it is—something about the first person who pulled the grass up over its mouth dying before morning."

"Surely," I replied, laughing, "not if they saw two crows the first thing after sunrise."

"There was, there is such a legend," she repeated; "I suppose they would not like to tell it you, lest you should laugh at them; but I really think the superstition had a great deal to do in the way of strengthening the 'it was *always so*' that you complain of."

We agreed to go down in the evening, and see if any of the people had continued what was so pleasantly commenced.

When the evening came, we rambled there; it was a fine night. From some particular cause, the arrival, I believe, of visitors in the neighbourhood, there was a demand for fish, and the men had set forth in their cobbles, but there were many women and children round the well. I was in great hopes that they had triumphed over their evil habit; I forgot for a moment that the habits of years are not often overcome in a few hours. One point was achieved: they were convinced of the existence of water, for they had turned down saucers, little dishes, or whatever utensils of the kind they could collect, over the plashy soil, and were dipping up the water so collected, and filling their kettles as fast as they could. Nancy was in capital humour: if the well really turned out to be a well, she had become a person of importance; but I thought she looked rather sadly at me.

"I ax yer honour's pardon," she said, as, after talking and advising, we were going away; "but, lady dear, which of ye was it pulled up the first grass?"

"I did, Mrs Cahill. Why do you ask?"

"Just out o' curiosity, my lady—a way I have." She crossed her hands over her bosom, and added in a solemn tone, "God mark ye to grace!"

This question and observation confirmed me in the belief I had gathered from the kind and anxious looks they bent upon me, that the foolish superstition had in a great degree cramped their exertions, and that a fear, peculiarly Irish, of being laughed at, prevented their telling me the fact.

I did not rise so early the next morning; and when coming down stairs, I saw Nancy's head thrust in through the hall door, which had a great dislike to close, partly perhaps from a feeling of hospitality, which even Irish hall doors seem to participate in, and partly from a certain awkwardness about the hinges, which, owing to their advanced age, were unwilling to move rapidly, if at all.

"Well, Nancy," I said, "I hope the well gave you plenty of fresh water this morning?"

"Ya, then, it's myself is glad to see yer face so cheerful-like this morning, lady dear, thanks be to the Almighty for his mercy. Amen!" And once more she crossed her hands over her bosom.

"And pray, Nancy, why should my face not be cheerful?" I inquired.

"Yarra! it's myself doesn't know, so I don't; only the gentry sometimes do be putting long faces on themselves for nothing. And are ye *brave and hearty* this morning, plase yer honour?"

"That I am, Nancy, thank you—never was better. I am always better in Ireland than any where else in the world."

"Why, thin, my lady," answered Nancy, quaintly enough, "if that's the way, it's a pity ye should ever leave it. Myself thinks there's some *charm*† about ye; but, may be, my lady, like the rest of the English *furriners*, you don't believe in the *charms*."

"Oh yes, Nancy, I believe in a great many charms."

Nancy advanced fairly into the hall, and throwing her grey hair back from her eyes with both hands, looked steadily in my face, exclaiming, "See that now!" "Yes, Nancy, there is a great charm in the kindness and good nature of my poor Irish friends."

Nancy looked disappointed and yet pleased.

"There is a great charm in industry, a great charm in patience, a great charm in perseverance. If we had not persevered with the well, you would have been journeying to the hill-spring to the end of your days, but I will see that trouble prevented before I leave you. And, Nancy, if you will find me a four-leaved shamrock, I will promise faithfully to exert all my powers of belief in its charms."

"God bless you, my lady; sure I never had the luck of finding sich a thing as that! I wish I had. Oh my! but I'm glad to see you well, ma'am; and *sure we'll have heart now to go on with the well ourselves*, and God's blessing on ye!"

"And why had you not heart to go on with it before?"

"Oh, ma'am, there's no good in telling you; maybe you'd be putting it in a book."

"Perhaps I might, Nancy."

"Ah, my lady, I and my people *always kept out of disgrace*."

* Very well.

† Spell.

"Well, but, Nancy, sure they put St Patrick and your own Daniel O'Connell in a book, and kings and queens, and they never consider it a disgrace. When there's nothing wrong done, what harm can there be in telling it?"

"Wisha! that's thrue; Morgan Regan has the Life of Saint Patrick."

"Well, and there is nothing disgraceful to the saint in it."

"Wisha, no! that's thrue!"

"Well, then, do you not see, what possible harm could there be in putting the well in a book?"

Nancy paused; and then, as if a sudden idea had struck her, she exclaimed, "Maybe, as I know the rights of it myself, I may as well tell you, for others will. Ye see, ma'am, long ever ago, before I was born, and my mother nothing but a dawshy slip of a girl running about the rocks, like our own *childre*, one of the fisher boys picked a very swarthy-coloured child off a wreck, and by the same token the mast of the vessel was to be seen at low water, off Greystone Point, for many a long sunny summer day, and many a bitter short winter one. Well, the very night Michael Grime (that was the boy's name) brought the child to the shore, the very same night the well fell in!"

"But it might have done so if the poor dark child had not been saved. I dare say it had been in a bad state."

"Sure it was always so in the memory of man; and what would ail it to keep so, as it had done for scores of years?"

"My good Nancy, is not that tower more likely to tumble down now than when it was built?"

Nancy was, however, too cunning to be trapped. She saw the analogy at a glance, and would not give in.

"Myself doesn't understand them things, but the well fell in any way," she said, with a twist of her shoulders, adding, "and the people said it wasn't for luck."

"That I believe. How can any thing be considered for luck that does harm?"

"Ay, indeed. Well, the swarthy child—it was a girl—delighted in sitting by where the well fell in, in the hot sun, or under the bames of the cold pale-faced moon, it was all one, picking up bits of grass or stones, and throwing them among the plashing water that hissed up out of the ground; and the roll of her great black eyes wasn't pleasant—and—"

I interrupted the narration by the question of "How did she live?"

"Is it how did she live? Oh, thin, I suppose up and down just with the neighbours; only, to be sure, the best bit and sup was saved for her who had no one to look to her, God help us! Well, ma'am, the people observed, as I heard tell, that the well filled up wonderful; and at morning, dawn and rising moon the swarthy child was there, nor would she suffer any to meddle with her or her doings, only sit and sing her song, like the sighing of a breaking heart, and would stay whispering about the houses even in the people's sleep. Nothing would she do but gather stones and grass to put in the well, and sing."

"Do you remember hearing what the words were she sang?"

"Yarra, no; not all out. She sang with a *furrin* tongue. Only this much I do mind hearing—a *wise woman* intarparted part of it, and the sense was this, that she would die on the grass planted by herself over the well, and leave her curse to the first hand that pulled the grass she sowed, and the curse she left was full and heavy—that the hand that did pull it might be cold before morning."

I smiled and held out my hand to Nancy, and with the feeling of an Irishwoman, no matter how rude or untutored, she pressed it to her lips.

"It isn't cold, God be praised," she said, "but it's not as warm as yer heart." I am free to confess that the pretty compliment softened the expression of Nancy's features wonderfully in my opinion.

"And what became of the girl?" I inquired.

"She pined, and pined, and pined, as a bird might that left too soon its mother's nest, and at last I heard tell she grew a shadow, and used to wrap the cold red shawl round her head, and her eyes would glare out from it like bonfires of a St John's night—and at last she was found dead by the well!"

"Poor thing! And you never heard who she was?"

"Yarra, no! how should we! Some said one thing, some another. Many thought she was something of a mermaid, others— But, any how, there was no doubt of her being—"

"What, Nancy?"

"Something not right," answered Nancy, turning away.

"Stay, Nancy; is it possible that this circumstance gave rise to the superstition which prevented your opening the well?"

"Shooperstition!" repeated Nancy, greatly offended. "Yarra, ma'am! how can you call it shooperstition! didn't my grandmother know the well to fall in?"

"Granted."

"And the swarthy craythur, whatever she was, to leave her skin an' bones over it?"

"Granted."

"And her curse, that the first hand that removed the grass might be cold before morning?"

* The truth.

"Granted."

"Sure, then, that's not shooperstition; it's real truth."

"My hand is not cold, and I pulled away finely at the grass."

"God save us! sure ye did!"

"Believe me, the Almighty loves his creatures too well to permit the foolish words of sinful people to act against those who love and trust him."

"May be so," said Nancy; "but was it always so?"

"Indeed it was. When you are in a passion, you wish a great deal of harm to your neighbours, and yet it does not come to pass."

"God forbid!" she exclaimed, crossing herself.

"Amen to that, good Nancy; and now, as I hope you are satisfied that I am alive and well this morning, go down to your house, stir up those lazy men and boys; you know, Nancy, they will work if you order them! And bring me a pitcher of well water for my dinner."

"Yarra, ma'am, clear water is very cold in the stomach."

"Now, Nancy, don't begin to undervalue the water the moment you have obtained it; but I will promise you all something stronger if you work hard. Good porter!"

We never suffered "it will do" to rest until we had achieved it is done! And the well was done, a comfort bestowed, and a superstition overcome, at a very small expense of time and trouble. Nancy to this day is quite lady patroness of the well, and, like all lady patronesses, a trifle capricious and tyrannical at times; but the pure fresh water is there with its thousand blessings, and the "neighbours are practically convinced that even if a thing has been 'always so,' there is no reason it should continue to be 'ALWAYS SO.'"

CAPTAIN COOK AT OWHYHEE.

In a new Encyclopedia of Useful Knowledge, recently published in numbers at Paris, we find an article from the pen of a noted French voyager, M. de Rienzi, in which some curious light is thrown on the circumstances attending the stay of Captain Cook at Owhyhee, the place, as all know, where that famous navigator met his unhappy end. The details that follow seem to have been picked up by means of personal inquiries among the existing generation of islanders, who keep in remembrance the most minute particulars relative to the death of Cook, having received the story from their immediate progenitors, in whose time the event occurred. There were especial reasons, indeed, why this catastrophe should leave a deep impression on the minds of the natives of Owhyhee.

On the 30th of November 1778, Captain Cook first came in sight of the island of Owhyhee, or Haouai, as it has been named by later voyagers. From the period mentioned, up to the middle of January, the captain continued to cruise about the shores of the island, trafficking frequently with the natives, who brought fish, bread-fruit, plantains, and various other kinds of provisions, to the two British ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*. On the 17th of January, Captain Cook cast anchor in the bay of Karakakooa, the shores of which are covered with habitations, where the principal people of the island reside. Here, accordingly, the voyagers came in contact for the first time with the chiefs of Owhyhee, and here, in the course of their stay, a succession of scenes took place which were unintelligible alike to Cook himself and to those who had to record their unfortunate close. The inhabitants (according to the original narrative of the voyage) exhibited the utmost delight on observing the intention of anchoring in the bay. "They came off in astonishing numbers, expressing their joy by singing, shouting, and the most extravagant gestures." At the same time, two chiefs of high rank came on board, and were followed by one of the leading priests, named Koah. The conduct of Koah on being presented to Cook was remarkable. "Being conducted to the cabin, he approached the commodore with the greatest deference, threw a piece of red cloth over his shoulders, and, retreating a few paces, made an offering of a small pig, at the same time pronouncing a discourse of considerable length. Red cloth is an article with which their idols are arrayed, and a pig is their common offering to the *Eatoos*. In the evening, the commodore, Mr King, and Mr Bailey, accompanied Koah on shore. As soon as they landed on the beach, they were preceded by four men, bearing each a wand tipped with dog's hair, and pronouncing, with a loud voice, a short sentence, in which the word *Orono* was very distinguishable." In a foot-note in the original narrative, it is further mentioned that "*Orono* was Cook's general appellation among the natives of Owhyhee. Sometimes it was applied by them to an invisible being inhabiting heaven." The true explanation of this title, and the cause of its

application to Captain Cook, may now be adverted to, before noticing the further homage bestowed on the commodore under the directions of Koah, and which the voyagers plainly saw to be of a religious nature, though they understood no more respecting the ceremonial.

Under any circumstances, a strong sensation would naturally have been caused among the natives of Owhyhee, by the arrival of such objects as the British ships; but the sensation was increased ten-fold by a tradition of the island, with which the natives connected the advent of the voyagers. "Many years previously," says M. Rienzi, "a great chief, named *Rono* (or *Orono*, as it is set down in the original narrative) exiled himself voluntarily from Owhyhee, but, ere he went, he announced prophetically to his countrymen that he would one day return upon a floating island, bearing (or large enough to bear) cocoa-trees, hogs, and dogs. His words were believed, and *Rono*, deified in his absence by the superstitious of his countrymen, became annually the object of a great festival, held chiefly to perpetuate the remembrance of his promise to return. Wrestling, racing, and other similar exercises, accompanied the celebration of this fête, which gradually became a most important affair in the island. When the *Resolution* and *Discovery* appeared off their shores, it was not unnatural for the islanders to imagine that the floating isle of *Rono* had at length come. In truth, while the ships cruised around the coasts, the impression spread universally through the island that Cook was the long-expected god *Rono*, and hence the extravagant joy of the natives on his anchoring in the bay of Karakakooa, as well as the homage which the high-priest Koah caused to be bestowed on him."

With this explanation, the reader will easily understand the nature of the rites, which were meaningless in the eyes of Cook and his friends. The original narrative states, that after Koah and the commodore had lunched, as already noticed, all the inhabitants either disappeared or prostrated themselves before the party as it marched onwards. Under the guidance of Koah, Cook and his friends reached what the narrative calls a *Morai*, or sacrificial temple. They were then conducted to the buildings or scaffolding on the top of this *Morai*, which "was a square solid pile of stones, of the length of four or five yards, the breadth of twenty, and the height of fourteen. Here Captain Cook was received by a tall young man, having a long beard, who chanted a kind of hymn, in which he was assisted by Koah." This hymn appears to have been a national one recording the history of *Rono* and the cause of his exile. M. Rienzi gives a translation of it, as still sung by the natives. It is in separate verses, as follows:—1st, *Rono* of Haouai, in former times, lived with his wife at Karakakooa. 2d, *Kai-ki-rani-ari-oponna* was the name of the divine object of his wedded love. A steep rock was their dwelling. 3d, A man ascended to the summit of the rock, and, when there, spoke thus to the wife of *Rono*:—4th, *O Kai-ki-rani-ari-oponna! thy lover salutes thee; deign still to favour him, discard others, and he will remain thine for ever.* 5th, *Rono*, overhearing this deceitful language, killed his wife in a moment of fury. 6th, Struck with remorse for his cruel act, he carried to a tomb the lifeless body of his wife, and wept long over her. 7th, Then, incited by a mad phrenzy, he ran over Haouai, fighting with all whom he met. 8th, And the astonished people said, 'Is *Rono* then mad?' and *Rono* replied, 'Yes, I am mad on account of *Oponna*, on account of my great love for her.' 9th, Having instituted games to honour the memory of his well beloved, *Rono* then embarked in a triangular canoe, and sailed towards far-away lands. 10th, But, before departing, *Rono* prophesied thus:—'I will return in future times, upon a floating isle, which shall carry cocoas, hogs, and dogs.'

To return to the original narrative. When the hymn of *Rono* was finished, "we were led to that side of the *Morai* where poles were erected; at the foot of which, twelve images were ranged in the form of a semicircle; the middle figure having a high table before it, on which we saw a putrid hog, and under it some cocoa-nuts, plantains, potatoes, bread-fruit, and pieces of sugar-cane. The commodore was conducted under this stand by Koah, who, taking down the hog, held it towards him; when, having again addressed him in a long and vehement speech, he suffered it to fall upon the ground, and ascended the (upper) scaffolding with him, though at the peril of their falling. We now beheld, advancing in solemn procession, and entering the top of the *Morai*, ten men bearing a live hog, and a piece of large red cloth of considerable dimensions. Advancing a few paces, they stopped and prostrated themselves; and *Kaireckee*, the tall young man already mentioned, approaching them, received the cloth, and carried it to Koah, who wrapped it round the commodore, and made him an offering of the hog.

Captain Cook was now aloft, in a situation truly whimsical, swathed in red cloth, and scarcely able to keep his hold in the rotten scaffolding." After a long alternate chanting from Koah and *Kaireckee*, the commodore was again brought down to where the images were. In his delight apparently, at having

the real living Rono to adore, Koah "expressed himself in a sneering tone to each of them, snapping his fingers at them as he passed." But to the image in the centre, which was a higher idol than the rest, being the figure of Rono himself, Koah prostrated himself, and kissed it, which Captain Cook did also, at the priest's request. The ceremonies were concluded in another part of the Morai, where Captain Cook, seated between two idols, was chanted to as before by the two chief performers. But "their speeches and responses, we observed, grew gradually shorter and shorter, and towards the conclusion, Kairekeea's did not exceed three or four words, which were answered by the word *Orono*."

In this manner was Captain Cook formally deified, as the living incarnation of the god Rono, or rather as the returned chief in person. The original narrative of the voyage says respecting this scene, "Of the singularity and novelty of the various ceremonies performed on this occasion, we can only form conjectures; but they were certainly highly expressive of respect on the part of the inhabitants, and, as far as related to the commodore, they approached to adoration." On a future occasion, when the captain went on shore, he was conducted to *Harree-no-Orono*, the house of Orono, where the above rites were repeated. Indeed, "while we continued in the bay (says the narrative), whenever the commodore came on shore, he was preceded by one of the priests, who proclaimed the landing of the *Orono*, and ordered the inhabitants to prostrate themselves. He was constantly attended by the same person on the water, where he was stationed in the bow of the boat, having a wand in his hand to give notice of his approach to the natives who were in canoes, on which they instantly ceased paddling, and fell on their faces till he had passed." All showed awe and terror in his presence. But their adoration was not confined to empty homages. Canoes laden with hogs, vegetables, and every kind of provisions, "were regularly sent to the ships. Nothing was demanded in return, nor was the most distant hint ever given that any compensation was expected." On inquiring from whom came all these stores, it was answered that they were sent at the expense of Kaoo, the chief-priest, then absent on an excursion with the sovereign of the island, who was named Teareebou.

On the 24th of January, Teareebou returned, and like the others, he hastened to show his reverence for the living Rono. He had a formal state interview in a tent with Captain Cook, and bestowed on him various rich feathered-cloaks, as well as hogs and other presents in clothing and food. The king continued to show the same feelings towards the voyagers, and the narrative says, that "to relate all the instances of generosity and civility which they experienced, would require volumes." But, at length, the enormous consumption of hogs and other provisions by the crews began to alarm the monarch and people of Owhyhee, and considerable anxiety was shown as to the probable time of Rono's departure. That event was fixed for the 4th of February, and previously to its occurrence, the king bestowed large presents on the commodore. Every one of the natives testified regret at parting with the crews, and all was good-humour and kindness.

But the ships met with squally weather on their departure, and were obliged to put back, on the 11th of February, into the bay of Karakakooa. Here they did not find the same warmth of feeling displayed as on their previous stay. The undeniable fact seems to have been, that the natives were afraid of a famine falling upon the island, through the enormous wants of Rono and his followers. This cause, at least, made the king and the chiefs shy and timorous, although the former waited respectfully on Captain Cook next day. As if guided by their sovereign's conduct, the natives then began to "renew their usual friendly intercourse" with the strangers. But, on the 13th, certain untoward circumstances took place, which were attended with most lamentable consequences. Various repairs being required by the British ships, both carpenters and sail-makers had been sent on shore for the furtherance of their respective operations, and the position chosen for this purpose was the ground around the Morai, where the observatory also was erected, under the guard of a corporal and six marines. The ground around the Morai being *tabooed*, or rendered sacred from intrusion, by the priests, no disturbance at first occurred at this spot. It was a watering-party sent on shore from the *Discovery*, which first fell into collision, on the afternoon of the 13th, with the natives. No injury to either party resulted, however, as Lieutenant King got peace restored by an appeal to some of the chiefs. Amity had just been restored on shore, on this occasion, when Captain Cook landed in his pinnace, and, nearly at the same moment, all eyes were turned to sea, where a native canoe was seen flying to the shore, pursued by one of the *Discovery's* boats, and fired on repeatedly by musketry from that vessel. Thinking this a case of theft, Captain Cook ran with an attendant or two to seize the depredators as they landed, but, being too late for this purpose, he sent some men into the country after the offending natives, who were hotly chased till it was dark. This was unfortunate, as the stolen articles had already been given up. Another mistake, and a much more unfortunate one, was committed by the officer who came in the small boat from the *Discovery*, in pursuit of the pilferers. This officer seized a canoe on the beach, and would not give it up to the owner, Pareea, a most influential

chief, who declared himself blameless in the matter of the theft. The officer was obstinate, and a scuffle ensued, in which Pareea was struck violently on the head with an oar. As this very chief had been one of the most ardent and generous friends of the British, all the natives within sight were roused to fury by the injury done to him, and attacked the strangers so fiercely that every man must have perished, had not Pareea himself timely regained his senses, and interposed to save them. The belief in Cook's divine power was made strongly apparent by Pareea's conduct on this occasion. In place of feeling anger at the injury done to himself, "he expressed much concern at what had happened, and begged to know if the *Orono* would kill him?" Though the matter ended thus peaceably at the time, the attempt to seize Pareea's canoe, and the injury done to his person, were mainly instrumental in raising the cry of ingratitude against the British, and in preparing the minds of the natives for next day's scenes.

On the morning of the 14th, the *Discovery* communicated to Captain Cook the information that its cutter had been stolen in the night-time. This seemed to the resolute commodore an event of sufficient importance to call for decisive measures, and, accordingly, he resolved to get the king and his youthful sons on board, as hostages for the missing property. This plan Cook had frequently tried with success on previous occasions of the like nature. Between seven and eight o'clock A.M., Captain Cook proceeded on shore, accompanied by a lieutenant of marines and nine men. On entering the village where the king had his residence, the British leader was received with respectful prostrations as hitherto, and offerings of small pigs. As the king and his sons had been on board the *Resolution* almost every day, the captain hoped that his true design would not be suspected; and so it partly turned out, as the old king and his two sons consented at once to go on board. In truth, the two princes had reached the sea-side, and had set foot on board the commodore's pinnace, when affairs suddenly assumed a new aspect. Owing to the unwonted appearance of the armed boats of the ships, which had been stationed by Cook across the bay, a great crowd of natives had been drawn to the beach, and suspicions of latent treachery seemed to be spreading among them. It is probable, however, that no expression of this feeling would have appeared, had not one of the old king's favourite wives followed him towards the shore, and entreated him, with tears, not to go on board. She was joined in her request by several chiefs, and the king became dejected and irresolute. Captain Cook pressed him for some time to go, but finally gave up the attempt, seeing that the object could not be effected without much bloodshed. Having come to this conclusion, the commodore moved slowly from the king's side towards the pinnace with his party, but he was doomed never to reach it. Unfortunately, the armed boats in the bay, fulfilling their orders, had fired on some transgressing or straggling canoes, and had killed a chief of consequence. The tidings of this loss reached the natives as they were gazing on Cook's departing steps. Convinced now of the ingratitude and hostile intentions of the British, and irritated beyond measure, the natives seized their arms, and rushed on Cook and his marines. The commodore faced the first native who advanced, and ordered him to retire; but the savage repeated his menaces with stone and spear. Cook fired a load of small shot at him, but the war-mat of the islander rendered the discharge harmless, and the assailant became only the more daring. The captain again fired, and the ball with which the second barrel was charged brought down the savage. The whole of the marines now fired in self-defence, and the armed boats near the shore also fired. Amid the scene of bloodshed and confusion which ensued, Cook turned round to the boats, to order the firing to be stopped. Hitherto no man had struck the *Orono*; but when his countenance was turned away, the iron spear of a savage was driven into his back, and the great navigator fell to rise no more.

As the subject of Captain Cook's visit to Owhyhee has been adverted to here chiefly on account of the light thrown upon it in the French work mentioned, we shall merely notice in conclusion one or two passages in the original narrative, which corroborate the explanation given of the story of Rono or Orono. All that the survivors of Cook ever saw of his remains, eagerly as they sought for them, consisted of his disjointed bones, and a shapeless mass of flesh, about nine or ten pounds' weight. The rest, it was said, had been cut to pieces and burnt. This was the account given by a native who had been the commodore's attendant on all ceremonies, and who, when he brought off the fleshy relic just mentioned to the ships, "lamented, with abundance of tears, the loss of the *Orono*." He afterwards asked, "with great earnestness and apparent apprehension, 'when the *Orono* would come again, and what he would do to them on his return?'" The same inquiry was frequently made by others, and there can be no doubt, that, notwithstanding the rash violence which caused them to assail him, the natives were afterwards deeply afraid of an angry reappearance of the *Orono*. The probability is, however, that the repeated sight of similar "floating islands" to those of Cook, would greatly weaken the force of this superstition in the course of succeeding years, although neither the history nor the worship of Rono are yet forgotten in Haouai.

Unquestionably, the deplorable end of Captain Cook

was an event less to be ascribed to any evil passions on the part of the poor natives, than to the unfortunate accidents which aroused their anger momentarily against those whom they had loaded with kindness and favours. Had the voyagers understood the true nature and full extent of the feelings which led the natives to name and to treat Cook as they did, the pacific influence of the *Orono's* divinity might have been tried, and might have averted the fall of him, who, if not divine, was at least a great and good human being.

LE LOCLE AND THE LOCLEOIS.

[We lately presented some interesting particulars from Mr Symon's "Arts and Artizans at Home and Abroad" respecting the working-people of Switzerland, whom that writer represents as the most intelligent and contented in the world. We may here add, from the same work, a very remarkable fact illustrative of the comfortable state of these people. "A few months ago, during a high wind, the most windward house in the village of Heiten (Appenzel) took fire; the houses were all of wood, and in a few hours the entire village was burnt to the ground. The loss of property was estimated at 400,000 florins (equal to £50,000); and as the place was occupied almost entirely by the labouring classes, a liberal subscription was immediately raised for the relief of the sufferers. When the distributors of the charity tendered the offered aid, to their great surprise they found but 140 individuals, not half the population, who required any relief, the rest having been received by their various relatives into their houses; an assistance which, added to the savings of the sufferers, enabled them to dispense wholly with the bounty of their neighbours." We venture to say that there is not a village in Great Britain, where the same independence of public bounty, under similar circumstances, would have been shown. As a proof of how much the contrary results might be expected amongst us, we can state as a positive fact, that, in a Scottish royal burgh of about 2000 inhabitants, 140 families (not much less than a third of the population) were found last winter ready to receive a portion of fifty pounds which a neighbouring gentleman sent to be distributed amongst the poor of the place, on acceding to his estates. The picture of sober industry, and consequent comfort and happiness, presented by the enlightened and universally productive Swiss, is so delightful to contemplate, that we feel much pleasure in laying before our readers the following letter, by an English gentleman resident in Le Locle, in the canton of Neuchâtel, descriptive of that village and its inhabitants.]

SWITZERLAND generally offers so few inducements as a winter residence to those of our country-people who seek a brighter sky, that I may very reasonably presume that our sojourn amid the snows of the Jura was the *premier coup-d'essai* [first attempt]; yet to true lovers of nature, a mountain country, at all seasons, affords so much of the sublime and magnificent, that, if tolerably robust in health, they cannot fail to derive enjoyment from the objects around them.

This elevated region, though tame when compared with the Oberland Alps, is not wanting in natural beauty, nor can it, in another point of view, be devoid of interest to the casual visitor. It includes the watch-making district of the canton of Neuchâtel, a scene of extraordinary industry, not often visited from curiosity. The monotony of our mode of life consequent to the season in this climate, will leave me but little to describe beyond the mere localities; but what we could glean of the habits of this people, who during a long winter were fully engaged in the various branches of an art which for many years past has been to them an increasing source of wealth, can scarcely fail to be acceptable to those who feel interest in the busy movements of the human hive.

The chief places of this district, which is included in the principality of Valengin, an hereditary possession of the king of Prussia, are Le Locle and La Chaux de Fonds, villages of six and seven thousand inhabitants. Le Locle, where we are now domiciliated, has been rising rapidly during the last eighteen months from the ashes of a dreadful devastating fire, which but for the intervention of two or three stone houses built some years ago from the first produce of the industry which now animates the whole range of these vallies, would have entirely erased the village. Lofty stone houses, with numberless windows and tall pyramidal roofs, each accommodating several families, even to as many as eight, the roof containing the necessary storerooms and lofts, now replace the ill-shaped wooden buildings of their forefathers, and though rather unsightly buildings, they are well suited to the climate and occupations of the inhabitants. The original village consists of one street nearly a mile in length, which is the principal thoroughfare; to this have been added a spacious market square, and several parallel and transverse streets. The old town-house is not in keeping with these alterations, nor is the church, though a large substantial edifice, sufficient for the increased and increasing population. Improvement in both these objects is expected to be brought under consideration when the ravages of the fire are recovered from.

On descending into Le Locle, after dark, a singular scene, resembling an illumination, presents itself; every window of the lofty houses is occupied by a workman with his lamp; even the cottages on the surrounding hills are seen glittering through the dark pine forests from the same cause, and afford to a stranger a striking proof of the industry of the inhabitants.

All summer-travellers in Switzerland have remarked the abundance of sparkling water with which its towns

and villages are supplied, and here indeed it does seem to run to waste from as many as twenty-four public fountains, some of which are of tasteful design.

The peculiarity of this narrow valley, which is three thousand and eighteen feet above the sea, is its enclosure on all sides, without any outlet, by precipitous green hills rising five and six hundred feet, backed by pine forests to double that height. Its length is somewhat more than two miles, and it varies from three hundred yards to a quarter of a mile and more in width. The Bied, a small rivulet, runs through its whole length, and loses itself in one of the natural caverns with which this limestone formation abounds; within its subterranean recesses are constructed mills for grinding and sawing, of rather primitive mechanism; but it is an effort of curiosity to explore this yawning abyss, where a false step would be fatal. The noise of the machinery and the rushing waters, combined with the darkness, which the twinkling lamp you are provided with seems only to render more apparent, are enough to appal an uninitiated visitor, and few strangers venture down its slippery ladders and dripping galleries.

I must give our own experience of the climate, which, from what I can learn, varies little from year to year. The winter may be said to have commenced with us early in October, and the spring brought little genial warmth until the month of May. Upon the arrival of the first fall of snow, sledges were taken into use, and continued their reign until the end of March, when the rains converted the streets into rivers of melting snow; during this long interval, every thing was effectually frost-bound, and the cold truly intense, the thermometer frequently showing ten degrees, and twice, during a dense fog which filled the valley, twenty degrees below the zero of Fahrenheit's scale. I must not forget, however, to mention that during the month of December we were favoured with twenty-four successive days of clear sunshine, and the calm which usually prevailed, rendered the extreme cold very bearable, and, unless it was attended by fog, there was no obstruction to daily exercise, and but little inconvenience was felt. Le Locle is in the latitude of forty-seven degrees, and the intensity of cold experienced there, is attributable to its elevated situation, and the want of circulation of air to relieve it from the occasional fogs which visit it. The substantial character of the houses, and the oven stoves with which each room is furnished, together with double glass windows, permit a very equal temperature to be kept up within doors. Open fire-places are not in favour, as they would not diffuse the same general warmth; nor is the peat, which is the common fuel, so applicable to them.

It is difficult to imagine so numerous a population as we are surrounded with, all fully employed upon one sole object, but the various branches of labour are almost as numerous as the separate parts of the machine to be made, thus occupying both sexes of all ages and degrees of talent and proficiency; for, as in Geneva, the trades and domestic arts are all provided for by strangers, mostly from Germany, or the German cantons of Switzerland, and a few Jews.

The watch-merchants, as they may justly be called, are but few; two or three houses carrying on the great export trade which provides for the disposal of not less than forty-five thousand watches annually; this prosperity has existed for several years, and seems yet on the increase, and, since all the tools are now made within the district, the imports are reduced to the necessary metals only, of which the quantities cannot be very large, and are drawn from France and England. This wholesale manufacture of watches excites a certain degree of interest. Once an article of luxury, the watch has now become a necessary, and in a moral point of view it would tend to show that the progress of education and refinement has at least taught the value of time, and, may we not equally hope, the advantageous use of it. Here they are made from the most inferior description, of ten francs' value, to the finest chronometer for purposes of science, selling at twelve hundred; but it is of the intermediate qualities for which the enormous demand exists, namely, flat watches of most exquisitely delicate and perfect workmanship, as well as other pocket watches and repeaters of less costly character. The whole business is conducted on the spot, or in the adjoining mountain hamlets, but always in private dwellings, where the females and children, in the intervals of domestic occupation, have each a separate department. Attempts have been made by greedy speculators to establish manufactories, but, happily for the health and morals of the young, they have hitherto failed. Grinding and polishing the chrysolites and rubies, which are so much in use for all fine watches, besides polishing, and in some cases finishing, the minutest parts, is the work of the women; the cutting out and forming in the rough, of much of the machine, is done by children, while the adapting and perfecting the whole belongs, comparatively, to a few, and they are the master workmen.

A vast number of the inferior articles just mentioned are annually spread, through German means, over the whole of Europe, while the two Americas and France swallow up almost all the better qualities. Indeed, it has been ascertained, upon the best authority, that the latter country is entirely supplied from Switzerland, including Geneva. We all know that comparatively few reach England, and that the few are generally smuggled in, the protecting duty of twenty-five per cent. ad valorem amounting nearly to

a prohibition; but as a proof that some few are speculated upon for the London market, I saw a small number in the maker's hands bearing the names of first-rate houses in our metropolis. The ingenious imitative Chinese are still indebted to Switzerland, but, for their independent taste, the watches must be made in pairs, and wholly of steel, or other white metal.

The temperate and industrious habits of this yet simple people would render any sumptuary laws unnecessary. They allow themselves but little time for amusement. Two clubs, where the men meet almost every evening in winter from six till nine o'clock, to read and discuss the news of the day, and play at cards or billiards, seem to occupy their only leisure. Gambling is totally unknown. At this season the women very rarely leave their homes. Many who are in easy circumstances have no servant (more than one is looked upon as an unpardonable advance in luxury among the most wealthy), and appear to be sufficiently occupied with their families and domestic duties. It is on Sunday, after the church-service, that family meetings take place, when they dine and sup together. Their hours are still very primitive; to dine at noon is the general custom, and this is little deviated from by the most luxurious.

For their charitable institutions and schools, the people of Le Locle deserve high encomium; they are supported entirely by voluntary contribution in the shape of donation or subscription, and are managed by committees who meet weekly or oftener. We hear of no paupers but those who are provided for in the hospice or asylum, and they are all aged and infirm, and mostly widows. The orphan school generally contains about two hundred children, who are clothed, educated, and brought up to useful callings. These institutions are much beholden to the unremitting attention paid to them by the two amiable and worthy *pasteurs*, who are truly indefatigable in these and all their other duties; and it is pleasing to witness the respect and esteem which their characters and deportment have obtained for them from all ranks of their parishioners.

We are kept *au courant des nouvelles* by the daily arrival of a post from Neuchâtel and Pontarlier, and a diligence from Besançon, besides the communication twice a-day by an omnibus with the sister village of La Chaux de Fonds, all on sledges. In spite of the obstructions the diligence must meet with on the mountain passes they have to cross, they are seldom much retarded, and generally find their way without accident, travelling by day only. The number of travellers is but small during the inclement weather, and a journey over these heights is truly a work of suffering; the mail in winter being a small ill-closed vehicle, carrying a pair of wheels, which are applied whenever the sledge fails, necessarily the case in the lower grounds towards the end of the season, whilst the upper regions still continue many feet deep with snow.

Notwithstanding the extensive forests by which we are surrounded, there are exceedingly few wild animals in this district, no large game, neither bears, wolves, nor wild boars. Some of the keenest sportsmen of this place succeeded in bringing home a hare or two; but the native partridge is exterminated, and woodcocks do not visit in any number. During the month of January, some traces in the snow gave notice of the arrival of wolves, the freezing over of the river Doubs being their usual passport from Franche Comté. Two were soon after seen by some travellers, but, although watched, and a general battue made by the inhabitants of the neighbouring hamlets, who are all excellent marksmen, the marauders managed to escape back into France without molestation, and also without having done any mischief. They are at this season usually in a most ravenous state, and are much feared by the country people.

Our nearest neighbouring village, Les Breuils, another abode of watchmakers, on the frontier of the canton of Neuchâtel, towards France, is most pleasantly situated. The river Doubs flows at its foot; the road to it from hence (a distance of about four miles) is over an elevated pass through majestic pine forests, and is exceedingly picturesque. During the spring and summer it is much visited, both by natives and strangers, on account of the *Saut du Doubs*, a spot about two miles lower down the stream, where the river falls abruptly from a height of nearly a hundred feet, forming a magnificent cascade, with all the due accompaniments of spray and rainbow in profusion. The river Doubs, which is here enclosed by bold rocky cliffs, partially clothed with beech and pine, rising three and four hundred feet perpendicularly, forms a succession of basins or small lakes, which were frozen over early this winter, and parties have been made, from Le Locle, to skate and drive in sledges on these fine sheets of ice. A tolerable *auberge* near the waterfall, which is always well provided with fine fish, especially trout, does not fail to attract many visitors at all seasons.

La Chaux de Fonds is five miles from us, and resembles Le Locle in most respects. Its greater elevation renders its climate yet more severe, but it is at the same time freer from fog. It was rebuilt some years ago, having also been nearly totally destroyed by fire; it is about as many years in advance in luxury as have occurred since that catastrophe; the wealthy, who are numerous, keep carriages, balls are encouraged during the winter, and it is even proposed to build a theatre. In real refinement and information, I still

question whether they have much taken the lead of their less ostentatious neighbours at Le Locle. Their political sentiments are of the ultra-liberal cast, and they were the most active in a late endeavour of a party in the canton to shake off the connection with Prussia.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN ENGLISH AGRICULTURE.

WE were happy to learn through the medium of the newspapers about twelve months ago, that a number of intelligent and patriotic noblemen and gentlemen of England had at length seriously entertained the subject of agricultural improvement in that country, and formed themselves into an association, in order to carry the great objects they had in view into immediate effect. The model upon which this English Agricultural Society is formed, is the Highland Society of Scotland, which has been in existence for about half a century, and has been of incalculable benefit to the northern part of the United Kingdom, both Highlands and Lowlands. The Highland Society now numbers among its members almost every nobleman and landed gentleman in Scotland, and also many farmers and persons engaged in professional and commercial pursuits. It has, in fact, become an overwhelmingly powerful association of influential individuals, all animated with one ruling wish—to improve the rural economy of the country. Large sums are annually dispensed by the Society in conferring rewards for the best practical essays on processes of husbandry—the construction of improved implements—experiments in the economy of feeding live stock—investigation of the diseases of cattle—improvements in breeds of sheep—modes of draining and fencing—and a thousand and other objects connected with the business of the agriculturist. Premiums to a large amount are likewise awarded at great annual exhibitions in different parts of the country; one of the features of these exhibitions being, that they are liberally supported both by the personal attendance and pecuniary contributions of the local gentry. And, to crown all, the Prize Essays of the association are published quarterly in an accessible form, in connection with the Quarterly Journal of Agriculture, at Edinburgh.

We have heard doubts entertained with regard to the real benefits conferred by the Highland Society; it has been alleged that the improvements in Scotch agriculture are to be traced to the anxious and isolated efforts of individual farmers, more than to any patronage afforded by this great association. It is, however, needless to go deeply into this question. The Highland Society has undoubtedly created and nourished a powerful emulative spirit throughout the country in favour of agriculture; has enlisted the entire body of gentry in the cause; raised the business of the husbandman to the dignity of a liberal science or art; promoted the growth of local agricultural clubs, and ploughmen's competitions, so that now, from one cause and another, any thing like bad farming would be looked upon as a disgrace. At the public meeting which took place some time ago for the establishment of the English Agricultural Society, Earl Spencer, in his speech on taking the chair, adverted to the benefits which had been derived from the institution of the Highland Society in the following terms:—"He would shortly," he said, "state the reasons which had induced him to wish that a society should be formed for the promotion of the interests of agriculture. He had seen and heard of the great benefits which Scotland had derived from the establishment of the Highland Society in that country. He believed that fifty or sixty years ago the agriculture of Scotland was decidedly inferior to that of England, but he need not tell them that this was no longer the case; on the contrary, he believed it must in fairness be admitted, that though there might be found farms in England as well cultivated as any in Scotland, no extensive tract of country in England could be found, in which the system of cultivation was so perfect as it was in the northern division of the kingdom. Even in the county of Norfolk there were only a few farms which could bear the comparison. He believed that this great and beneficial change, as regarded the agriculture of Scotland, had been mainly owing to the institution and exertions of the Highland Society. Every one who had visited the different parts of the country in England, must have seen the capacity for improvement which every where existed. Different modes of cultivation were practised in similar soils, and those, too, almost similarly situated. Both could not be right. It could not be right that four horses should be used at the plough in one place, and only two horses in another, and those under precisely similar circumstances. He thought that, by establishing a powerful society, having the means of communicating information throughout the country, reckoning among its members persons from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, they would be able at last to diffuse among the farmers of England a knowledge of the best mode of cultivating their land. But he would say he was sanguine enough to expect more—he trusted they would be able, by the combination of science and practice, to improve even the best cultivation that at present existed. He would tell them what he thought the best mode of carrying that object into effect. They must have a society established in the metropolis as a central society. They must have the power of corresponding with persons in every part of the

United Kingdom, as well as with foreign agricultural societies, and scientific men abroad, who had applied themselves to the study of this subject. He thought, then, the great object of the society should be the advancement of agricultural knowledge, and it was only by communicating with those who had attended to the subject, and by diffusing the knowledge so obtained to the farmers of England, that he expected the greatest benefits should be derived. But, besides this, it was imperatively necessary that they should have agricultural exhibitions in different parts of the country; for although agriculture should be the principal object, yet, to excite an interest in their favour, they must have meetings for this purpose. Now, he would beg to say, that to make this society effective, it must have powerful influence and co-operation; and it would be necessary that men of all parties should unite and act together."

The Duke of Richmond took a similar view of the subject, and in moving one of the resolutions "said he had ever felt that it was a matter of vital importance to the interests of agriculture that the improvements in science should be brought to bear upon it. Some persons had mentioned that the farms of Norfolk were as good as those of Scotland; and if this were true, it only proved the necessity of establishing the proposed institution, for it was not contended that within a few miles of both those places the farms were cultivated at all. The Highland Society of Scotland was universally popular with the landholders in that country, and the reason was, because they never thought of discussing politics, but emulated each other in advancing the interests of agriculture. They had made the greatest improvements in it by irrigation, draining, and bringing waste lands into profitable cultivation, as well as by stimulating the industry of the labourers by the distribution of premiums. He was therefore justified in expecting that success would attend the present experiment, from the benefits which had been produced in another country from a measure of the same kind."

In conformity with resolutions adopted at the above meeting, the English Agricultural Society was formed, and is now in operation, with upwards of eleven hundred members. One of the most conspicuous evidences of its existence, has been the recent publication of certain papers and reports on a variety of agricultural topics, in the form of a Quarterly Journal;* and we observe that it has already issued a long list of subjects for prize essays, and for competition at annual shows, precisely on the plan of the Highland Society. A very considerable effort having thus been made towards the improvement of all branches of rural economy in England, it is anxiously to be wished that it may in due course of time be crowned with complete success. Whatever questions may be raised with respect to the policy of excluding foreign produce from our markets, it is clear that it would be highly for the advantage of England, if, at the expense of little else than additional skill and attention, a large increase in the quantity of human food could be annually extracted from the bosom of the soil. It is, for example, computed that on an average 26 bushels of wheat are raised from an acre of land; if, therefore, from a better selection of seed, or from a better mode of ploughing, this amount could be raised to 27 bushels, a total increase would be gained of 475,000 quarters, worth about £1,200,000. Far more surprising results have followed the improvements of Scotch husbandry; and we must never forget the startling truth, that Great Britain now supports 17,000,000 of inhabitants with the same ease that it supported 9,000,000 in 1750: the island has grown no larger in the interval, and there is no important variation in the importations of grain at the two periods. The increased means of subsistence is entirely attributable to agricultural improvement.

In a paper contributed to the Journal of the English Agricultural Society, by Mr John Dudgeon of Skylaw, near Kelso, we are furnished with a view of the progressive improvements in Scotch agriculture within the last fifty or sixty years, and also some details respecting the comparative reproductive powers of the soil now and formerly. The following is worth quoting:

"The reproductive powers of the improved system of agriculture, in comparison with that effected by the method of treatment pursued at the beginning of this inquiry, is no less conspicuous, and is also worthy of notice. Take, for example, the case of a farm of 100 acres, after the fashion of 1784, under its rotation of, 1st, fallow; 2d, wheat; 3d, barley; 4th, oats; 5th, peas; and similar land, now under a system of, 1st, turnips; 2d, barley or wheat; 3d, clover (hay); 4th, pasture; 5th, oats; and, estimating the weight of straw of the crops of both periods alike at 3 cwt. per qr., according to the estimated produce stated above, we appear to be justified in adopting the following result:—

| | | Tons. | Tons. |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Crop of 1784. | 80 acres grain, 4 qrs. per acre | 320 | 40 |
| | 320 qrs. at 3 cwt. per qr. | | |
| Crop of 1827. | 40 acres grain, 5½ qrs. per acre | 220 | 33 |
| | 220 qrs. at 3 cwt. per qr. | | |
| | 20 acres hay, 30 cwt. per acre | 600 | |
| | 20 do. turnips, 20 tons, do. | | 400 |
| | | | 460 |
| Difference in materials for manure | | | 415 |

Thus, without taking into account the greatly less quantity of straw disposable for manure in the former case, from the want of other fodder, we have an in-

crease of reproductive materials equal to nearly ten times the amount of the first period."

The direct causes of this amazing increase, are, as is well known, improved modes of husbandry, particularly in draining and manuring, and attention to proper rotation of cropping. Fortunately, the desire for agricultural improvement in Scotland has encountered no opposition of any kind from any class of the community. The farmers generally, with only so much education as is to be obtained at the parish school, have in almost every quarter entered warmly into the spirit of improvement, and, favoured by long leases and capital saved from industry, have pushed cultivation to an extent which could not have been dreamt of fifty years ago. The farm-labourers, likewise, throughout the trying period of change, have in no case manifested either turbulence or vengeful feelings, and hence the whole economy of rural affairs has advanced profitably and securely to its present comparatively finished condition. On Scotch farms, such as are common in East Lothian, Berwickshire, or Mid-Lothian, all processes of culture, and the entire preparation of produce for market, are conducted on an enlarged economic principle, so as to yield the largest possible quantity of material at the lowest possible charge—the profit of such a system being of course ultimately favourable to the consumer. A Scotch farmer of the new school, therefore, is, in point of fact, a manufacturer. His farm is a large grain factory, in which cheap automatic processes, as in the cotton factory, take the place of cumbersome manual labour. In the southern and other districts of England, you still hear the noisy din of the flail; but that venerable instrument has been long since banished from modern Scotch farming. The flail! Reader, think of the flail being still in use in England! The other day we visited the farm of Mr Allan at Pilton, within a couple of miles of Edinburgh, to inspect the operations of a rotary steam-engine, which had been lately applied to a thrashing machine. This machine, at the most insignificant cost for fuel and attendance, can thrash, winnow, and completely dress for market, a stack of wheat of thirty bushels in five hours.* According to the wretched practice in the south, this quantity of grain could not be thrashed with the flail in a less period than a month, at the expense of the wages of two men during that period. Facts such as this could be multiplied to any extent, in illustration of the extraordinary contrast between the improved Scotch and the English farming. We have little doubt that the English Agricultural Society will endeavour to introduce the various improvements which have proved so eminently successful in the north; and in doing so, they well deserve the support of every lover of his country, of whatever condition in life he may be. Our only fear is, that the great host of ignorant small farmers and peasantry will perseveringly oppose every attempt to advance, and, for some time at least, resolutely hold to the usages of a bygone age. But neither pains nor expense must be spared by the Society to obviate this external difficulty, the very existence of which reflects discredit on the whole country. It need hardly be hinted, that if primary education had been generally established in England twenty or thirty years ago, no such difficulty could now have been started; and hence the general education of the hitherto neglected portion of the people becomes a preliminary and necessary step to that agricultural advancement which is now felt to be desirable.

As this subject is one of much national importance, we shall from time to time recur to it, in connection with the appearances of the Journal of the English Agricultural Society.

DUEL FOR THE HONOUR OF ABERDEEN BUTTER.

Sir Walter Scott has alluded to the laird of Culrossie, "who fought a duel for the honour of Aberdeen butter" (Croker's Boswell, vol. iii. p. 38). Would that he had told the story! It goes that an English gentleman supping in a Glasgow coffee-room, ordered the waiter to remove the butter on the table and bring him better. The servant replied that his master had no better, for that was Aberdeen butter; and the Englishman was proceeding to growl in very audible terms at Scottish butter in general, and particularly Aberdeen butter, when a gentleman from a neighbouring box addressed him with "That's nae true; Aberdeen butter is as gude butter as e'er gae'd down your ha'e!" The consequence may be imagined; a challenge was promptly given and as promptly accepted, and the parties met. In the combat, which was with the small-sword, Culrossie was worsted; but, after thanking his adversary for his life, he added, "I'll say yet, that better butter than Aberdeen butter ne'er gae'd down a Southron's thrapple."—*Book of Don Accord.*

ANTIQUITY OF SMOKING.

Small tobacco-pipes of an ancient form are frequently found in Ireland on digging or ploughing up the ground, particularly in the vicinity of those circular enclosures called Danish forts, which were most probably the villages or settlements of the native Irish. In the first volume of the "Anthologia Hibernica," there is a print of one which was found at Banneckstown, county Kildare, sticking between the teeth of a human skull: and it is accompanied by a paper, which, on the authority of Herodotus, Strabo, Pomponius, Mela, and Solinus, goes to prove that the northern nations of Europe were acquainted with tobacco, or an herb of similar properties, and that they smoked it through small tubes—of course

long before the existence of America was known. The arguments in favour of the antiquity of smoking receive additional support from the discovery of several small clay pipes in the hull of a ship found some years since, when excavating a new sluice-way, at the upper end of the Fairwater at Dantzic. The ship was discovered buried in the ground at the depth of about twenty feet; she measured, from stem to stern, in the inside, fifty-four feet, and in breadth twenty feet. A box of tobacco-pipes was found, all whole, with heads about the size of a thimble, and tubes from four to six inches in length. It is supposed the vessel had been lost in some convulsion of nature previous to the foundation of the city, which had been built over the spot at least five hundred years since.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

BARRING OUT.

MISS EDGEWORTH has founded one of her instructive stories for youth upon the custom of Barring Out, and those who remember that tale will be aware of the origin of the term. It arose from a practice, prevalent not very long ago in many parts of England, of barring out the masters of schools from the scene of their educational labours and of their birchen supremacy. The agents in this feat, of course, were the pupils of the seminary, and the deed was commonly done at a definite annual time, at Christmas in some places, and at Fasten's Eve in others. The master was usually kept out for the space of three days, if the boys, who barricaded every avenue to the place, and defended it like a besieged city, could maintain their ground so long. But the duration of the barring out was liable to variation, as well from the occasional defeat of the insurgents, as from the operation of other causes. The barring out was not a mere frolic, having fun only in view. If the boys could keep their teacher on the outside of the academy door for the full term of three days, the deposed dignitary was bound by custom to enter into a capitulation with the youngsters, and to grant to them certain demands relating to the number of holidays for the ensuing year, to the allotment of the hours of study and recreation, and to other important points connected with the economy of the establishment. On the other hand, if the pupils failed in holding out the school-house against their assailants for the period of three days, the master admittedly had a right to dictate his own terms in all those matters which have been mentioned. He obtained also the momentous right of castigating at will the actors in the rebellion—a labour (of love, perhaps) which they always took care to save him in cases where they were successful, by making that point the subject of a very explicit condition in the act of capitulation. This document, it may be observed, was commonly drawn up in a formal and most diplomatic style, securities for the fulfilment of all its stipulations being provided on both sides, and signatures affixed by the master and the scholars, or by plenipotentiaries appointed by the latter for the purpose. The "high contracting parties" were then at peace for the year.

Being assured by many voracious authorities that barring out was a custom very general in England, particularly in the ancient burgh towns and large villages, and considering the practice to have been of frequent if not yearly recurrence, one cannot help wondering what notions of discipline the masters of such schools must have entertained sixty or seventy years ago, when the custom, we are informed, was still extensively prevalent, though not so common as at an earlier date. We are told, that, after the rebellion had fairly commenced, the teacher always made the most vigorous attempts to enter his school-house and subdue his insurgent vassals; but really the affair must have been half a joke, if not wholly so, and the gravity of his siege must have been of a mock cast, otherwise he would certainly have taken effectual precautionary measures against the occurrence of the business at all. The worthy gentleman's quiet submission in the first instance to a periodical rising of this kind, seems to us just such a piece of behaviour as if he had intentionally sat down in his easy-chair and pretended to be asleep, until the urchins in his train crept in, bound him hand and foot, and then picked his pocket of the school key; and as if, after these events, he had made mighty efforts to cast off his bonds and regain his lost authority. After all, the inexplicabilities of this practice of barring out must be set down mainly to the score of that "second nature, habit," which makes men and communities patiently tolerate gross abuses for immense periods of time, being blinded by the very familiarity of such abuses to their pernicious influence and consequences.

The grave and moral Joseph Addison is described by his biographers as having been the leader of a barring out at the grammar-school of Litchfield, and as having on that occasion displayed a degree of disorderly daring, scarcely to have been expected from one who afterwards displayed so well-regulated a temperament. This exploit was performed about the year 1684 or 1685. As the custom decreased in frequency, a barring out became naturally a more serious matter

* The Journal of English Agriculture, vol. i. part I. Murray, London.

* We propose, at an early opportunity, to describe Mr Allan's thrashing machinery.

than when it was an event that came round pretty regularly with Christmas or Fasten's Eve. The master's ire at his exclusion from the arena of his greatness became more real and sincere in its nature, and, on the other hand, the insurgent boys, knowing what they would draw down upon themselves, took all possible means to render their resistance effectual. Besides the usual steps of stealing the door-key, and of barricading the windows with benches, &c., they were wont to arm themselves with all sorts of missiles, and even to get pistols and other fire-arms into their hands, not for the purpose of killing their besiegers, certainly, but in order to keep them at a proper distance—the spectacle of a pistol muzzle having usually a powerful tendency to effect this object, as boys and men know. The master, in particular, would be likely to retreat at such a sight, being so totally unaccustomed to this mode of seeing the young idea shoot. Provisions the young rebels always laid in. In place, however, of thus recounting the ways and means of a barring out, we had better present an account of a pretty recent one, communicated by a living actor in the scene to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1828, to which excellent periodical we acknowledge our obligations on this as on many other occasions. The date of the affair is not given, but it probably occurred about the commencement of the present century, when straggling instances of this strange practice were still turning up now and then, and here and there. The grammar-school of Ormskirk in Lancashire was the place where this barring out took place.

"It was a few days before the usual period of the Christmas holidays arrived, when the leading scholars of the head form determined on reviving the ancient but almost obsolete custom of barring out the master of the school. Many years had elapsed since the attempt had succeeded, and many times since that period had it been made in vain. The scholars had heard of the glorious feats of their forefathers in their boyish years, when they set the lash of the master at defiance for days together. Now, alas! all was changed; the master, in the opinion of the boys, reigned a despot absolute and uncontrolled. The merciless cruelty of his rod, and the heaviness of his tasks, were insupportable. The accustomed holidays had been rescinded; the usual Christmas feast reduced to a nonentity, and the chartered rights of the scholars were continually violated. These grievances were discussed one by one; and we all were unanimously of opinion that our wrongs should, if possible, be redressed.

At the head of the Greek class there was one whose very soul seemed formed for the most daring attempts. He communicated his intentions to a chosen few, of whom the writer was one, and offered to be the leader of the undertaking, if we would promise him our support. We hesitated; but he represented the certainty of success with such feeling eloquence, that he entirely subdued our opposition. He stated that Addison had acquired immortal fame by a similar enterprise. He told us that almost every effort in the sacred cause of freedom had succeeded. He appealed to our classical recollections; Epaminondas and Leonidas were worthy of our example; Tarquin and Caesar, as tyrants, had fallen before the united efforts of freedom; we had only to be unanimous, and the rod of this scholastic despot would be for ever broken. We then entered enthusiastically into his views. He observed that delays were dangerous; the 'barring out,' he said, 'should take place the very next morning, to prevent the possibility of being betrayed.' On a previous occasion, he said, some officious little urchin had told the master the whole plot—several days having been allowed to intervene between the planning of the project and its execution; and to the astonishment of the boys, it appeared they found the master at his desk two hours before his usual time, and had the mortification of being congratulated on their early attendance, with an order to be there every morning at the same hour!

To prevent the recurrence of such a defeat, we determined on organising our plans that very night. The boys were accordingly told to assemble after school hours at a well-known tombstone, in the neighbouring churchyard, as something of importance was under consideration. Our leader took his stand at one end of the stone, with the head boys who were in the secret on each side of him. 'My boys (he laconically observed), to-morrow morning we are to bar out the flogging parson, and to make him promise that he will not flog us hereafter without a cause, or set us long tasks, or deprive us of our holidays. The boys of the Greek form will be your captains, and I am to be your captain-general. Those who are cowards had better retire, and be satisfied with future floggings; but you who have courage, and know what it is to have been flogged for nothing, come here and sign your names.' He immediately pulled out a pen and a sheet of paper; and having tied some bits of thread round the finger ends of two or three boys, with a pin he drew blood to answer for ink; and to give more solemnity to the act, he signed the first, the captains next, and the rest in succession. Many of the lesser boys slunk away during the ceremony, but on counting the names, we found we mustered upwards of forty—sufficient, it was imagined, even to carry the school by storm. The captain-general then addressed us:—'I have the key of the school, and shall be there at seven o'clock. The old parson will arrive at nine, and every one of you must be there before eight, to allow us one hour for barricading the doors and windows. Bring

with you as much provision as you can, and tell your parents that you have to take your dinners in school. Let every one of you have some weapon of defence; you who cannot obtain a sword, pistol, or poker, must bring a stick or cudgel. Now, all go home directly, and be sure to arrive early in the morning.'

Perhaps a more restless and excited night was never passed by young recruits on the eve of a general battle. Many of us rose some hours before the time; and at seven o'clock, when the school-door was opened, there was a tolerably numerous muster. Our captain immediately ordered candles to be lighted, and a rousing fire to be made (for it was a dark December morning). He then began to examine the store of provisions, and the arms which each had brought. In the mean time, the arrival of every boy with additional material was announced by tremendous cheers.

At length the church clock struck eight. 'Proceed to barricade the doors and windows (exclaimed the captain), or the old lion will be upon us before we are prepared to meet him.' In an instant the old oaken door rang on its heavy hinges. Some, with hammers, gimlets, and nails, were eagerly securing the windows, while others were dragging along the ponderous desks, forms, and every thing portable, to blockade every place which might admit of ingress. This operation being completed, the captain mounted the master's rostrum, and called over the list of names, when he found only two or three missing. He then proceeded to classify them into divisions or companies of six, and assigned to each its respective captain, and its respective duties.

We next commenced an examination of the various weapons, and found them to consist of one old blunderbuss, one pistol, two old swords, a few rusty pokers, and sticks, stones, squibs, and gunpowder in abundance. The fire-arms were immediately loaded with blank powder, the swords were sharpened, and the pokers heated in the fire. These weapons were assigned to the most daring company, who had to protect the principal window. The missiles were for the light infantry, and all the rest were armed with sticks.

We now began to manoeuvre our companies, by marching them into line and column, so that every one might know his own situation. In the midst of this preparation, the sentinel whom we had placed at the window loudly vociferated, 'The parson! the parson's coming!'

In an instant all was confusion. Every one ran he knew not where, as if eager to fly, or screen himself from observation. Our captain instantly mounted a form, and called to the captains of the two leading companies to take their stations. They immediately obeyed, and the other companies followed their example, though they found it much more difficult to manoeuvre when danger approached, than they had a few minutes before. The well-known footstep which had often struck on our ears with terror, was now heard to advance along the portico. The master tried to lift the latch again and again in vain. The muttering of his stern voice sounded on our ears like the lion's growl. A death-like silence prevailed. We scarcely dared to breathe. He approached close to the window, and with an astonished countenance stood gazing upon us, while we were ranged in battle array, motionless as statues, and silent as the tomb. 'What is the meaning of this?' he impatiently exclaimed. But no answer could he obtain; for who would then have dared to render himself conspicuous by a reply? Pallid countenances and livid lips betrayed our fears. The courage which one hour before was ready to brave every danger, appeared to be fled. Every one seemed anxious to conceal himself from view; and there would certainly have been a general flight through the back windows, had it not been for the prudent regulation of a corps-de-reserve, armed with cudgels, to prevent it.

'You young scoundrels, open the door instantly,' he again exclaimed; and what added to our indescribable horror, in a fit of rage he dashed his hand through the window, which consisted of small diamond-shaped panes, and appeared as if determined to force his way in.

Fear and trepidation, attended by an increasing commotion, now possessed us all. At this critical moment every eye turned to our captain, as if to reproach him for having brought us into this terrible dilemma. He alone stood unmoved; but he saw that none would have courage to obey his commands. Some exciting stimulus was necessary. Suddenly waving his hand, he exclaimed aloud, 'Three cheers for the barring out, and success to our cause! (hurra! hurra! hurra!) The cheers were tremendous. Our courage revived; the blood flushed in our cheeks; the parson was breaking in; the moment was critical. Our captain, undaunted, sprang to the fire-place—seized a heated poker in one hand, and a blazing torch in the other. The latter he gave to the captain of the sharpshooters, and told him to prepare a volley; when with the red-hot poker he fearlessly advanced to the window seat, and daring his master to enter, he ordered an attack—and an attack indeed was made, sufficiently tremendous to have repelled a more powerful assailant. The missiles flew at the ill-fated window from every quarter. The blunderbuss and the pistol were fired; squibs and crackers, ink-stands and rulers, stones, and even burning coals, came in showers about the casement, and broke some of the panes into a thousand pieces; while blazing torches, heated pokers, and sticks, stood bristling under the window. The whole

was scarcely the work of a minute. The astonished master reeled back in dumb amazement. He had evidently been struck with a missile, or with the broken glass, and probably fancied he was wounded by the fire-arms. The school now rang with the shouts of 'victory,' and continued cheering. 'The enemy again approaches,' cries the captain; 'fire another volley; stay, he seeks a parley; hear him.' 'What is the meaning, I say, of this horrid tumult?' 'The barring out, the barring out!' a dozen voices instantly exclaimed. 'For shame,' says he, in a tone evidently subdued; 'what disgrace you are bringing upon yourselves and the school! What will the trustees—what will your parents say?' 'William,' continued he, addressing the captain, 'open the door without further delay.' 'I will, sir,' he replied, 'on your promising to pardon us, and to give us our lawful holidays, of which we have lately been deprived, and not set us tasks during the holidays.' 'Yes, yes,' said several squealing voices, 'that is what we want; and not to be flogged for nothing.' 'You insolent scoundrels! you consummate young villains!' he exclaimed, choking with rage, and at the same time making a furious effort to break through the already shattered window, 'open the door instantly, or I'll break every bone in your hides.' 'Not on those conditions,' replied our captain, with provoking coolness; 'come on, my boys; another volley.' No sooner said than done, and even with more fury than before. Like men driven to despair, who expect no quarter on surrendering, the little urchins daringly mounted the window seat, which was a broad old-fashioned one, and pointed the fire-arms and heated poker at him, whilst others advanced with the squibs and missiles. 'Come on, my lads,' says the captain, 'let this be our Thermopylae, and I will be your Leonidas.' And indeed so daring were they, that each seemed ready to emulate the Spartans of old. The master, perceiving their determined obstinacy, turned round without further remonstrance, and indignantly walked away.

Relieved from our terrors, we now became intoxicated with joy. The walls rang with repeated hurrahs! In the madness of enthusiasm some of the boys began to tear up the forms, throw the books about, break the slates, locks, and cupboards, and act so outrageously that the captain called them to order; not, however, before the master's desk and drawers had been broken open, and every plaything which had been taken from the scholars restored to its owner.

We now began to think of provisions. They were all placed on one table, and dealt out in rations by the captains of each company. In the mean time we held a council of war, as we called it, to determine on what was to be done.

At this critical moment a shout was set up that the parson and a constable were coming. Down went the pokers, and, as if conscience-stricken, we were all seized with consternation. The casement window was so shattered, that it could easily be entered by any resolute fellow. In the desperation of the moment we seized the desks, forms, and stools, to block it up; but our courage in some degree had evaporated, and we felt reluctant to act on the offensive. The old gentleman and his attendant deliberately inspected the windows and fastenings; but without making any attempt to enter, they retreated, for the purpose, as we presumed, of obtaining additional assistance. What was now to be done? The master appeared obdurate, and we had gone too far to recede. Some proposed to drill a hole in the window seat, fill it with gunpowder, and explode it, if any one attempted to enter. Others thought we had better prepare to set fire to the school sooner than surrender unconditionally. But the majority advised what was perhaps the most prudent resolution, to wait for another attack, and if we saw no hopes of sustaining a longer defence, to make the best retreat we could.

The affair of the barring out had now become known, and persons began to assemble round the windows, calling out that the master was coming with assistants, and saying every thing to intimidate us. Many of us were completely jaded with the over-excitement we had experienced since the previous evening. The school was hot, close, and full of smoke. Some were longing for liberty and fresh air, and most of us were now of opinion that we had engaged in an affair which it was impossible to accomplish. In this state of mind we received another visit from our dreaded master. With his stick he commenced a more furious attack than before; and observing us less turbulent, he appeared determined to force his way, in spite of the barricades. The younger boys thought of nothing but flight and self-preservation, and the rush to the back windows became general. In the midst of this consternation, our captain exclaims, 'Let us not fly like cowards; if we must surrender, let the gates of the citadel be thrown open; the day is against us, but let us bravely face the enemy, and march out with the honours of war.' Some few had already escaped, but the rest immediately ranged themselves on each side the school, in two extended lines, with their weapons in hand. The door was thrown open—the master instantly entered, and passed between the two lines, denouncing vengeance on us all. But as he marched in, we marched out in military order; and giving three cheers, we dispersed into the neighbouring fields.

We shortly met again, and after a little consultation it was determined that none of the leaders should come to school until sent for, and a free pardon given. The defection, however, was so general, that no one

pooreal punishments took place. Many of the boys did not return till after the holidays, and several of the elder ones never entered the school again."

We chanced lately to notice the manner in which the Dublin College journals narrate the fact of such and such pupils having been trained in that seminary. The words are, that such a person, at such and such a time, *educatus erat sub ferula*; that is to say, "was educated under the birch." This emphatic record tells a tale applicable to all the teaching of bygone days, and, perhaps, the custom of barring out originated in, or is in part attributable to, the natural desire of shaking off the burden of this ferulean tyranny. Better days have come, and better still are coming, for education, for the which blessing let boys and birch be duly grateful.

LONG ABSTINENCE FROM FOOD AND AIR.

In the *Asiatic Journal* for February 1837, is an article, copied from the *Indian Journal of Medical and Physical Science* of Calcutta, to which it was communicated by Mr H. M. Twedell of Bancoorah, respecting a Hindoo who practises what may be considered as a kind of trade, by allowing himself for a remuneration to be buried, or otherwise shut up, apart from not only food, but air, for a month at a time. The document which immediately follows, constituting the principal part of this article, is a letter written by Lieut. A. H. Boileau, of the Engineers, first assistant in the Great Trigonometrical Survey. The gentlemen whose names are mentioned in the letter are Captain Trevelyan of the Bombay Artillery, and Cornet, now Lieutenant, Macnaghten, of the 5th Regiment Light Cavalry.

"I have just witnessed a singular circumstance, of which I had heard during our stay at this place, but said nothing about it before, the time for its accomplishment not being completed; this morning, however, the full month was over, and a man who had been buried all that time, on the bank of a tank near our camp, was dug out alive, in the presence of Esur Lal, one of the ministers of the Muharawal of Jaisulmer, on whose account this singular individual was voluntarily interred a month ago. He is a youngish man, about thirty years of age, and his native village is within five kos of Kurnaul; but he generally travels about the country to Ajmeer, Kotah, Endor, &c., and allows himself to be buried for weeks, or months, by any person who will pay him handsomely for the same. In the present instance, the rawul put this singular body in requisition, under the hope of obtaining an heir to his throne; and whether the remedy is efficacious or not, it certainly deserves to be known.

The man is said, by long practice, to have acquired the art of holding his breath, and stopping the interior opening of the nostrils with his tongue; he also abstains from solid food for some days previous to his interment, so that he may not be inconvenienced by the contents of his stomach, while put up in his narrow grave; and, moreover, he is sewed up in a bag of cloth, and the cell is lined with masonry, and floored with cloth, that the white ants and other insects may not easily be able to molest him. The place in which he was buried at Jaisulmer, is a small building about twelve feet by eight feet, built of stone; and in the floor was a hole about three feet long, two and a half feet wide, and the same depth, or perhaps a yard deep, in which he was placed in a sitting posture, sewed up in his shroud, with his feet turned inwards towards the stomach, and his hands also pointed inwards towards the chest. Two heavy slabs of stone, three or six feet long, several inches thick, and broad enough to cover the mouth of the grave, so that he could not escape, were then placed over him, and I believe a little earth was plastered over the whole, so as to make the surface of the grave smooth and compact. The door of the house was also built up, and people placed outside, that no tricks might be played, nor deception practised. At the expiration of a full month, that is to say, this morning, the walling up of the door was broken, and the buried man dug out of the grave; Trevelyan's moonshee only running there in time to see the ripping open of the bag in which the man had been enclosed. He was taken out in a perfectly senseless state, his eyes closed, his hands cramped and powerless, his stomach shrunk very much, and his teeth jammed so fast together, that they were forced to open his mouth with an iron instrument, to pour a little water down his throat. He gradually recovered his senses, and the use of his limbs, and, when we went to see him, was sitting up, supported by two men, and conversed with us in a low, gentle tone of voice, saying, 'that we might bury him again for a twelvemonth if we pleased.' He told Major Spiers, at Ajmeer, of his powers, and was laughed at as an impostor; but Cornet Macnaghten put his abstinence to the test at Pokhur, by suspending him for thirteen days, shut up in a wooden chest, which, he says, is better than being buried under ground, because the box, when hung from the ceiling, is open to inspection on all sides, and the white ants, &c. can be easier prevented from getting at his body, while he thus remains in a state of insensibility. His powers of abstinence must be wonderful to enable him to do without food for so long a time, nor does his hair grow during the time he remains buried.

I really believe that there is no imposture in the case, and that the whole proceeding is actually conducted in the way mentioned above.

Mr Twedell adds—"Some other information I obtained, in the course of conversation with Lieut. Boileau, and which I noted down. Lieut. Boileau was unacquainted with the man's name or caste; he believed that he had taken up the life of a fakcer—he understood that the man had been buried six or seven times, but whether for any period longer than a month, he knew not—he did not hear how the man discovered his powers, or when he commenced to practise them. Lieut. Boileau arrived at Jaisulmer after the interment, and saw the place, described in his letter, in which the man was buried. There was a guard of four or five chuprases, in the employ of the muharawal, as he understood, who were on the watch to prevent any interference or imposition. The process of burying, and of disintering, was conducted in the presence of Esur Lal, one of the ministers of the muharawal. The day fixed for the disinterment was known to Lieut. Boileau, but not the exact hour. Capt. Trevelyan's moonshee, who had set forth to give intelligence when operations were to be commenced, arrived only in time to see the people ripping open the cloth, or shroud, in which he had been enclosed. The moonshee immediately started off a man to inform his master and Lieut. Boileau, who were in their tents, at a distance of about three furlongs.

They waited a few seconds to apprise Lieut. Mackeson, of the 14th Regiment N. I., British Agent for the navigation of the Indus, who was disinclined to accompany them, and repaired to the spot as quickly as possible. Perhaps a quarter of an hour had elapsed since the opening of the grave, before they arrived. The people had thrown a clean cloth over the man; two of them supported him; he presented an appearance of extreme emaciation and debility; but, weak as he was, his spirit was good, and his confidence in his powers unabated, as in answer to Lieut. Boileau's and Capt. Trevelyan's inquiries, he said, 'that we might bury him again for a twelvemonth if we pleased.' Lieut. Boileau examined, and measured with his walking-stick, the grave in the floor of the chamber in which the man had been buried, and also the two slabs of stone which had been used to cover the mouth of the grave. For seven or eight days preceding the burial, the man lived entirely upon milk, regulating the quantity so as to sustain life, whilst nothing remained to give employment to the excretory organs. In that state he was buried. He confesses to have great dread of the white ants. Several folds of cloth were spread on the bottom of the grave, to protect him from their attacks. On taking nourishment after his release, he is said to be in a state of anxiety, until he has ascertained that the powers of his stomach and intestines are not impaired. Lieut. Boileau saw nothing more of the man; he understood that he regained his strength, and was for some time in attendance at the durbar of the muharawal, in the hope of receiving his promised reward; and that, tired of waiting until the purse-strings of his patron were loosened, he had stolen a camel, and decamped.

Until further information is obtained, it might be thought precipitate to theorise on the probable means by which this strange being maintains the mastery over the functions of life. Yet there is one paragraph in Lieut. Boileau's letters, bearing on this point, on which some remarks are admissible. The paragraph alluded to runs thus:—

'The man is said, by long practice, to have acquired the art of holding his breath by shutting the mouth, and stopping the interior opening of the nostrils with his tongue.' If this be the case, it is supposed that he exerts this power as soon as he finds himself comfortably settled in his grave, before the small quantity of vital air with which he is surrounded, is deteriorated. To force the tongue into the pharynx, and to retain it there until respiration is suspended, it is requisite that the jaws should be closely united. In Lieut. Boileau's letter, it is mentioned that his teeth were jammed so fast together, that they were forced to open his mouth with an iron instrument. Of the state of his tongue, nothing was remarked. It is now well known that the slaves in South America exert this power of the tongue to obstruct respiration, and occasion death."

We presume, from the respectable testimonials thus adduced, that there can be little doubt of the reality of the above occurrences. For their explanation science is, we believe, scarcely yet prepared, although instances of long abstinence from at least food are not new to the philosophical world.

LADY CORK'S RAFFLE.

Lady Cork, having one day taken into her head to have a "raffle," or lottery, for a charitable purpose, mentioned her idea to Lewis, who entered into the project with great willingness, and under his direction the whole affair was managed. As it was arranged that every body was to win something, Lewis took care that the prizes should be of a nature that would create the most ludicrous perplexity to their owners. Accordingly (for the raffle took place at a *soirée*) the assembled guests were parading the brilliantly-lighted drawing-rooms, burdened with the most out-of-the-way articles the eccentric hostess could procure, while the inventor of this novel kind of *plaisanterie* was silently enjoying the joke of their distress. Gentlemen were seen in every direction running about with tea-pots in their hands, or trays under their arms, endeavouring to find some sly corner in which to deposit their prizes; while young ladies were sinking beneath the weight, or the shame, of carrying a coal-scuttle or a flat iron. Guinea-pigs, birds in cages, punch-bowls, watchmen's rattles, and Dutch ovens, were perplexing their fortunate, or as, perhaps, they considered them-

selves, unfortunate proprietors; and Lady Cork's raffle was long remembered by those who were present, as a scene of laughter and confusion.—*Monk Lewis's Life and Correspondence.*

THE WAR OF THE LEAGUE.

[BY T. B. MACAULAY, ESQ. M.P.]

[Henry IV., on his accession to the French crown, was opposed by a large part of his subjects, under the Duke of Mayenne, with the assistance of Spain and Savoy. "In March 1590, he gained a decisive victory over that party at Yvri. Before the battle, he addressed his troops, 'My children, if you lose sight of your colours, rally to my white plume—you will always find it in the path to honour and glory.' His conduct was answerable to his promise. Nothing could resist his impetuous valour, and the leaguers underwent a total and bloody defeat. In the midst of the rout, Henry followed, crying, 'Save the French!' and his clemency added a number of the enemies to his own army."—*Allen's Biographical Dictionary.*]

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, oh pleasant land of France!

And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy.
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy walls a-siege.
Hurrah! hurrah! for a single field hath turned the chance of war,
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and King Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land!
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand;
And, as we look'd on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for his own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armour dress,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He look'd upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He look'd upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, "God save our Lord the King!"

"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,—
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,—
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme, to-day, the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving! Hark to the mingled din,
Of life, and steed, and tramp, and drum, and roaring culverin!
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint Andre's plain,
With all the hirling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies now,—upon them with the lance!
A thousand spears are striking dead, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;

And in they burst, and on they rush'd, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours! Mayenne hath turn'd his rein.

D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish Count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heap'd with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail;

And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our van,
"Remember St Bartholomew," was pass'd from man to man;
But out spake gentle Henry, "No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go."
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre!

Ho! maidens of Vienna! Ho! matrons of Lucerne!
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistols,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearman's souls!

Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright!
Ho! burghers of Saint Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night!
For our God hath crush'd the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,

And mock'd the counsel of the wise and all the glories of the brave.
Then glory to his holy name, from whom all valours are;
And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of Navarre.

—*Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, 1824.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

Take another story of this noble beast, which I know to be founded in fact:—A vessel was driven on the beach of Lydd, in Kent. The surf was rolling furiously—eight poor fellows were crying for help, but not a boat could be got off to their assistance. At length a gentleman came on the beach, accompanied by his Newfoundland dog. He directed the attention of the animal to the vessel, and put a short stick into his mouth. The intelligent and courageous fellow at once understood his meaning, and sprang into the sea, and fought his way through the waves. He could not, however, get close enough to the vessel to deliver that with which he was charged; but the crew joyfully made fast a rope to another piece of wood, and threw it towards him. He saw the whole business in an instant; he dropped his own piece, and immediately seized that which had been cast to him, and then, with a degree of strength and determination almost incredible, he dragged it through the surf, and delivered it to his master. A line of communication was thus formed, and every man on board was rescued from a watery grave.—*Youatt's Humanity to Brutes.*

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